

CD2010--67



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

2010-11 SEASON

Thursday, October 21, 2010
12:10 pm. Walter Hall

THURSDAYS AT NOON

Chamber Gems of Alexander Rapoport

Melanie Conly, soprano
Peter Longworth, piano
Katharine Rapoport, viola
Peter Stoll, clarinet

PROGRAM

Alexander Rapoport

Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano (2010)

Prelude
Dark Waltz
Interlude
Dirge
Interlude
Jig

Lines from the Song of Songs (1997)

Shakespeare's Aviary: Songs about Birds from Shakespeare's Plays (2002)

Winter Song (from *Love's Labour's Lost*)
Bird of Dawning (from *Hamlet*)
Hark! Hark! The Lark at Heaven's Gate Sings (from *Cymbeline*)
Spring Song (from *Love's Labour's Lost*)

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Next on Thursdays at Noon

October 28, 2010

Wind Spectacular in F

The fourth installment of the critically acclaimed Wind Spectacular series features some of Toronto's finest wind players in music by Emile Bernard and Franz Krommer, conducted by David Briskin.



COMPOSER'S NOTES

Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano: I composed my Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano specifically for this afternoon's performers as a companion piece for Mozart's *Kegelstatt* Trio for the same instrumentation. In German "Kegelstatt" means "bowling alley". Apparently Mozart was an excellent tenpins player, and according to one apocryphal legend he actually wrote the work in a bowling alley. In my own Trio I derived the principal motive that you will hear throughout the work from my impression of the bowling ball rolling down the aisle and striking the pins. But despite this admittedly frivolous source of inspiration I have attempted a serious work that takes us through very different emotional states, as suggested by the movement titles: Dark Waltz, Dirge and Jig.

Lines from the Song of Songs: The oldest extant scrolls containing the *Song of Songs* date from around 300 BCE. As an oral tradition, parts of it may be much older, perhaps really going back to the time of King Solomon. I know of no love poetry which is more beautiful or more exalted. I composed my *Lines from the Song of Songs* for some very good friends of mine who asked for a piece for their tenth wedding anniversary. I chose some fragments that express the thoughts of a young bride anticipating her wedding and I tried to capture her complex feelings of trepidation and eagerness.

Shakespeare's Aviary: I have always found it difficult to set English-language poetry to music, largely, I think, because poets who write in English tend to imagine speech rather than song. Texts that Shakespeare intended as songs in his plays are the most wonderful exception. The language and image presentation are comparatively simple, yet powerful, so that we can follow them easily with the music going on. Three of the four bird songs in this cycle are intended as songs in their plays. The other is a setting of the beautiful lines spoken by the walk-on character Marcello in Act One of *Hamlet* about the legend that the cock crows all night on Christmas Eve in order to keep mischievous nocturnal spirits at bay by making them think it's already dawn.

BIOGRAPHIES

Alexander Rapoport holds diplomas in composition and traditional composition from the Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst (currently known as the Musik-Univversität) in Vienna and Master of Music and Doctor of Music degrees from the University of Toronto. His teachers and mentors include Augustin Kubizek, Karl Heinz Füssl, Oskar Morawetz, Lothar Klein and Derek Holman. He has received commissions for works in such diverse media as orchestral, choral and chamber music, film scores, incidental music for live theatre and musical comedy. At the University of Toronto, Rapoport holds a cross-appointment, teaching both at the Faculty of Music and in the Division of Humanities at the University of Toronto Scarborough campus.

Melanie Conly regularly performs at international music festivals, and appears as a soloist with orchestral and choral organizations. She is consistently noted for her compelling stage presence and dramatic flair as well as her "passion and charm" (*Now Magazine*). Conly is an enthusiastic advocate of contemporary vocal music. She has premiered several important works, including Kater Soper's *Helen Enfettered* at Carnegie Hall and Robert Rival's *Red Moon and other Songs of War* at the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival. She maintains a class of vocal and piano students in her Toronto studio, and frequently teaches while travelling.

Violist and violinist **Katharine Rapoport** enjoys an active career as a solo recitalist and chamber musician and has given master classes and workshops throughout North America. She is an adjunct professor at the University of Toronto and a member of Esprit Orchestra. Her recent engagements have included lectures and recitals featuring traditional repertoire and contemporary Canadian works at Limmud Festival Colorado, at the Montreal Violafest and at the New Music series at University of Illinois. She is the author of *Violin for Dummies*, part of Wiley's "For Dummies" series.

Peter Longworth performs across Canada and abroad as a solo pianist, accompanist and chamber musician. He is a member of the Duke Trio, along with violinist Mark Fewer and cellist Tom Wiebe. Longworth has been a winner of the Chicago Symphony, Skokie Valley and World Symphony competitions and a finalist of the Busoni International Piano Competition. He has appeared as a soloist with the Chicago Symphony, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony and the Mississauga Symphony. Longworth also teaches piano performance at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Clarinetist **Peter Stoll** has been a prizewinner of the International Clarinet Society Competition as well as the first prize winner in chamber music at the National Competitive Music Festival. He has performed extensively abroad, including appearances with the Volga Wind Ensemble and the Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra. He is active as a solo, orchestral and chamber music performer as well as master class clinician, adjudicator and teacher at the University of Toronto. He has commissioned, performed and recorded numerous works for clarinet by Canadian composers.

TEXTS

Lines from the Song of Songs (from Solomon, Chapter 5)

I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying: Open to me, my sister, my love, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

I rose to meet my beloved and my hands dropped with myrrh and my fingers smelt sweet upon handles of the lock.

His head is of the most fine gold and his locks are bushy, black as the raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set.

His cheeks are as a bed of spices, of sweet flowers; his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with beryl; his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires; his legs are as pillars of marble set on fine gold. His mouth is most sweet; he is altogether lovely.

O ye daughters of Jerusalem, this is my beloved, this is my friend.

Shakespeare's Aviary (Shakespeare)

1. Winter Song (from *Love's Labour's Lost*)

When icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the Shepherd blows his nail,
When Tom bears logs into the hall
And Milk comes frozen in a pail,
When blood is nipped and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit, tu-whoo! A merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw
And birds sit brooding in the snow
And Marion's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs is in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit, tu-whoo, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

2. Bird of Dawning (from *Hamlet*)

Some say that ever gainst that season comes,
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long.
And then, they say, no spirit walks abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,
No fairy takes nor witch hath pow'r to charm,
So hallowed and gracious is the time.

3. The Lark (from *Cymbeline*)

Hark! Hark! The Lark at heaven's gate sings
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies,
And winking marybuds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise.

4. Spring Song (from *Love's Labour's Lost*)

When daisies pied and violets blue
And ladysmocks all silver white
And cuckoo buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight
The cuckoo then, from every tree
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:
Cuckoo, cuckoo. O word of fear,
Unpleasant to the married ear.

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws
And merry larks are ploughman's clocks,
When turtles tread and rooks and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, etc.